Table of Contents

Table of Contents……..….ii
List of Figures…….……....vi
List of Tables……..……ix
Abstract…….……...xi
Acknowledgements…….……..xii

INTRODUCTION 1
0.1 Aims and research questions 2
0.2 The research context for Late Bronze Age settlements 3
0.2.1 Late Bronze Age lowland landscapes: midden sites and timber platforms 4
0.2.2 Late Bronze Age lowland enclosures: ringworks 5
0.3 Structure of thesis 7

CHAPTER ONE – A HISTORY OF BRITISH HILLFORT ORIGINS 8
1.1 Before archaeology: Druidic, Roman, Dark Ages or Viking? 8
1.2 1850s – 1900s: Confirming an Iron Age Date 10
1.3 1900s – 1920s: Race and potential Bronze Age Origins 12
1.4 1930s: History, Invasionism and 4th century BC building 14
1.5 1940s – 1950s: The beginning of chronology 18
1.6 1960s: The dismissal of invasionism and Bronze Age beginnings 20
1.7 1970s: Classification and Index 23
1.8 1980s – 1990s: Theories of Society 24
1.9 2000s: Re-evaluation and regional development 26
1.10 Recent work in Ireland 27

CHAPTER TWO - APPROACHING HILLTOP SITES: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY 31
2.1 Understanding settlement patterns 31
2.2 Investigating the prehistoric landscape 34
2.2.1 The landscape settings of Late Bronze Age hilltop sites 34
2.2.2 Landscape genealogies 37
2.2.3 Regional identity 39
2.3 Methodology 41
2.3.1 Data collection 41
2.3.2 Non-hilltop settlement sites 45
2.3.3 Data Quality 47
2.3.4 Establishing Chronology 49

2.4 Methodology employed for the landscape chapter 54
2.4.1 Height Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) 54
2.4.2 Proximity to water 55
2.4.3 Pre-existing ancient monuments 55
2.5 Settlement Chapter Methodology 56
2.6 Material Culture Chapter Methodology 57
2.7 Conclusion 57

CHAPTER THREE – CLIMATIC CHANGE IN LATE BRONZE AGE BRITAIN 58
3.1 The great climate debate – what was actually happening to the climate in the Late Bronze Age? 58
3.1.1 The peat bog, palynological and flooding records 62
3.1.2 Recent palaeoclimatological studies 64
3.1.3 Potential limitations of climatic studies 65
3.2 Climate Change and its effect on Late Bronze Age society 66
3.3 Discussion 71

CHAPTER FOUR – LOCATING LATE BRONZE AGE HILLTOP SITES 73
4.1 The landscape setting of Late Bronze Age hilltop sites 73
4.2 Case study hilltop sites 75
4.3 The Height Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) 83
4.4 The availability of water on Late Bronze Age hilltop sites 91
4.5 Evidence of pre-existing ancient monuments 99
4.6 Discussion 103
4.6.1 Wales and the Marches 103
4.6.2 SW England 105
4.6.3 Coastal Communities 107
4.7 Conclusion 108

CHAPTER FIVE – SETTLING LATE BRONZE AGE HILLTOP SITES 110
5.1 Western settlement evidence 110
5.1.1 Problems with data quality on hilltop sites 110
5.1.2 Settlement evidence in the Atlantic west of Britain 110
5.2 Building on hilltops – Enclosure and Structure 111
5.2.1 Enclosure 111
5.2.1.1 Unenclosed activity 113
5.2.1.2 Palisaded enclosures 113
5.2.1.3 Ramparts 116
5.2.1.4 Other forms of enclosure 119

5.2.2 Structure 121
5.3 Living and working on hilltops – Occupation, Craftworking and Agriculture 126
5.3.1 Occupation 126
5.3.1.1 Occupation layers and middens 126
5.3.1.2 Hearths and cut features 127
5.3.2 Craftworking 128
5.3.2.1 Metalworking 129
5.3.2.2 Textiles 131
5.3.3 Agriculture at hilltop sites 134
5.3.4 Agriculture at non-hilltop sites 138
5.4 Discussion 139
5.5 Conclusion 141

CHAPTER SIX – INHABITING LATE BRONZE AGE HILLTOP SITES 142
6.1 Material culture in the Late Bronze Age 142
6.1.1 Changing patterns of deposition 142
6.2 Creating chronologies from material culture 144
6.2.1 Ceramics 144
6.2.2 Metalwork 147
6.2.2.1 Wilburton 149
6.2.2.2 Ewart Park 149
6.2.2.3 Llyn Fawr 150
6.3 The material culture of Late Bronze Age hilltop sites 151
6.3.1 Personal items 152
6.3.2 Weapons 156
6.3.3 Tools 160
6.3.3.1 Axes 162
6.3.4 Craftworking 165
6.3.4.1 Woodworking and construction 165
6.3.4.2 Food and crafts 166
6.3.5 Pottery 167
6.3.5.1 Interconnectivity 168
6.3.5.2 Functionality 172
6.4 Summary 177
6.5 Conclusion 178

CHAPTER SEVEN – LATE BRONZE AGE HILLTOP SITES – THE WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN AND WHY 180
7.1 *Who* built the Late Bronze Age hilltop sites? 180

7.2 *What* were Late Bronze Age hilltop sites? 181
7.3 *Where* were Late Bronze Age hilltop sites? 184
7.4 *When* were Late Bronze Age hilltop sites built? 187
7.5 *Why* were Late Bronze Age hilltop sites created? 195
7.5.1 Meeting places – animals, feasting, metalworking 195
7.5.2 Established hilltop sites 200
7.5.3 Maritime connections 204
7.6 Summary 207

CHAPTER EIGHT – CONCLUSION AND CRITICAL REVIEW 208
8.1 Late Bronze Age hilltop sites – a narrative 208
8.2 Aims met and research questions answered? 209
8.2.1 Geographical scope 209
8.2.2 The dataset 210
8.2.3 The climate change question 211
8.2.4 So what? 211
8.2.5 Future research recommendations 212

BIBLIOGRAPHY 214

APPENDIX 1 – DATA QUALITY GRADING FOR HILLTOP SITES 275

APPENDIX 2 – RADIOCARBON DATES FOR ALL SITES 276
Wales/Marches 276
SW England 285
Non-hilltop sites 287

APPENDIX 3 – AOD GRAPHS FOR HILLTOP SITES 299
Wales/Marches 299
SW England 306

APPENDIX 4 – CERAMIC ASSEMBLAGES
Ceramic assemblages for hilltop sites 311
Ceramic assemblages for non-hilltop sites 313

APPENDIX 5 – DETAILS OF NON-HILLTOP SITES 314